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National Infant Immunization Week Arrives In April

National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) is a national effort to educate parents, caregivers, providers, and communities on the importance of timely infant immunization. Over 500 communities in the United States are expected to participate in this year's observance scheduled for April 25 – May 1. This year National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) is working together with the Pan American Health Organization's Vaccination Week in the Americas, April 24-30, to promote immunization in all countries of the Americas. Over 35 countries in the Western Hemisphere are joining together to highlight the need for routine vaccinations and to promote access to health services for infants and children during this week.

Vaccines are among the 20th Century's most successful and cost effective public health tools available for preventing disease and death. They not only prevent a vaccinated individual from developing a potentially serious disease, but they also help protect the entire community by reducing the spread of infectious agents.

The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (SAMHD) is preparing to celebrate NIIW as well. NIIW is the perfect opportunity for the SAMHD to reiterate the importance of children's immunizations. On April 22, 2004 San Antonio Mayor, Edward D. Garza will issue a proclamation to officially designate April 24 through May 1, 2004 as "Infant Immunization Week" in San Antonio. The focal point of NIIW activities will be a National Infant Immunization Week-Vaccines for Children Appreciation Breakfast. The breakfast event will be held on Thursday,

April 29th at the Institute of Texan Cultures and will bring together national, state, local immunization partners. Dr. Fernando A. Guerra, Director of Health for the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District will deliver a local immunization perspective, additionally representatives from the Texas Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will offer state and national immunization insights. Additionally, the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District will host an open house at the Main Immunization Clinic downtown, release public service announcements, and place street banners around town to celebrate and promote NIIW.

Vaccines for Children providers are urged to mark their calendars for April 29, 2004 and check their mail starting in April for invitations to this meaningful occasion. Healthcare providers in the community are encouraged to promote NIIW in their facilities by offering incentives to patients that are seen during NIIW. Incentives might be given to patients that are up to date or immunized and incentives could include inexpensive baby and children items like; bibs, sipper cups, coloring books, crayons, and age appropriate toys. Providers can view the National Immunization Program's NIIW site at <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/events/niiw/default.htm> for more information on promoting immunizations.

Your efforts to promote immunizations throughout the year by educating parents and immunizing their children have steadily increased the immunization coverage rates in San Antonio and throughout Bexar County. *But our work has just begun.* Each year approximately 24,000 new residents are born in our community and each one is vulnerable to devastating vaccine preventable diseases. During NIIW celebrate the accomplishments that are evident by the lack of vaccine preventable diseases and strive to ensure that no child goes un-protected.

New Program Manager



The SAMHD Immunization Division has a new Program Manager. On February 24, 2004 Dr. Fernando Guerra promoted Ms. Brenda I. Lemke, MHA to this position. Ms.

Lemke is not a newcomer to immunizations. Brenda started her career with the Health Department in 1996 as an intern and became a Health Program Specialist with the Immunization Division that same year. She advanced to become a Health Program Supervisor in 1998 and a Special Projects Coordinator in 1999. She has

worked in numerous programs in the division to include the Registry, WIC Linkage, Vaccines for Children, CASA, and Special Projects. Brenda's immunization experience over the past eight years has prepared her well for her new leadership role. Congratulations Brenda on your promotion!

Immunization Leader Retires

After more than 26 years of working in the National Immunization Program (NIP) immunization program, Dr. Walter Ornstein announced his retirement, effective March 1, 2004. Following his retirement from CDC, he will be taking a position with the Emory Vaccine Center at Emory University working on vaccine policy issues and clinical vaccine development efforts. Beginning January 12, Steve Cochi will assume the position of Acting Director of the National Immunization Program.

Excerpts from Dr. Ornstein's retirement announcement are included below:

My career at CDC has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. I have been privileged to be part of many successful efforts to protect and improve the public's health; each of which provided an opportunity to work together and in partnership with persons and groups throughout CDC, the United States, and the world. During my time at CDC, I witnessed the eradication of smallpox, the elimination of endemic transmission of measles in the United States, and the achievement of record or near record lows for almost all of the childhood vaccine-preventable diseases. And importantly, we have achieved and maintained record or near record high levels of immunization coverage for childhood vaccines.

As I reflect on my time at NIP, I see many accomplishments that we can point to with much pride and satisfaction. Children with meningitis from *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib), once a common occurrence on pediatric wards, have become a rarity. There are fewer than 20 cases of acquired rubella reported each year in the United States, down from over 57,000 cases in 1969 when rubella vaccine was first licensed. Marked gains have been made against

varicella and invasive pneumococcal disease in children. It's been an honor and a privilege to have been a part of these successes. I'm also thankful to the many people and organizations I've been able to work with during my tenure at CDC. Ultimately, people are what determine the success and effectiveness of NIP and CDC programs-and I've been able to work with a wide range of skilled and talented people. As Director of the National Immunization I have repeatedly witnessed NIP's personnel playing vital and effective roles designing, implementing, managing, supporting, and evaluating our programs and efforts. The people at NIP should be very proud of their efforts and accomplishments.

The list of achievements by NIP staff is impressive in both its length and scope. While our primary focus has been on childhood immunization, NIP's personnel also have made major contributions to protecting adults from vaccine-preventable diseases; helped define the barriers to vaccine use and identify effective immunization strategies; expanded vaccine safety efforts and activities, and in the process, helped make vaccine safety activities a fundamental part of our immunization program; fostered and modeled effective, comprehensive approaches to health and risk communications; and promoted the effective use of information technology, including immunization registries.

The SAMHD wishes Dr. Ornstein new successes as he embarks on his new role with Emory University. To read more about the NIP you can go to <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/> and for information about the Emory Vaccine Center see <http://www.emory.edu/WHSC/YERKES/VRC/>

Vaccine Studies Examine Effectiveness

Pentacel M5A07

The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (SAMHD) will be collaborating with Aventis Pasteur to conduct a clinical research, two-staged study at the main downtown Immunization Clinic. The objective is to determine any interference of Prevnar® (pneumococcal vaccine) on the immune responses when administered along with Pentacel™ a pentavalent vaccine (DTaP, HIB, and IPV antigens). The Pentacel™ vaccine is used to reduce the number of injections while maintaining a high level of protection to vaccine preventable diseases. Eligible subjects include healthy infants, two months of age with at least thirty-six weeks of gestation at delivery. Infants must have also received one dose of the Hepatitis B vaccine. The study consists of nine visits over a sixteen-month period and blood samples will be obtained from all enrolled subjects. Parent or guardian must be willing to comply with study guidelines. Subjects participating in the study will be financially compensated and offered standard immunizations free of charge. For more information please contact Marcela Martinez at 207-3968.

Havrix

The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (SAMHD) is currently conducting two Hepatitis A research studies in 12-13 month old children. The objective of the studies is to evaluate the immunogenicity of administering the Hepatitis A vaccine at an early age as well as with other childhood vaccines. Currently in the United States (US), the Hepatitis A vaccine is not indicated for children below the age of two. Up to 18% of reported Hepatitis A cases occur among children in day-care, their household contacts or employees in day-care centers. It continues to be one of the most frequently reported vaccine-preventable diseases. Vaccination of children at a younger age would help to decrease the number of Hepatitis A cases. Eligible subjects include healthy children, 12-13 months of age. The study consists of five visits over a twenty-month period and blood samples will be obtained from all enrolled subjects. Parent or guardian must be willing to comply with study guidelines. Subjects participating in the study will be financially compensated and offered standard immunizations free of charge. For more information please contact Marcela Martinez at 207-3968.

Planning Your Vacation or Business Trip?

If you're planning a vacation, business or missionary trip, your first stop should include a visit to one of our travel clinics at the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District.

Many factors should be considered when traveling abroad:

- Current health status
- Vaccination history
- Endemic health-related risks to the country or countries you will be visiting
- Planned activities in urban or rural areas
- Duration of stay and accommodations

At least 4 – 6 weeks prior to your departure, take advantage of our many services:

- Counseling pertaining to immunization status and health
- Administration of necessary vaccines (required or recommended by visiting county)
- Issuing International Health Certificates for Yellow Fever
- Updating your immunization record
- Issuing anti-malarial prescriptions

Travelers should obtain the following information before contacting the clinic to ensure an accurate assessment of individual health needs as follows:

- A trip itinerary which includes all countries to be visited and duration of stay
- A listing of special activities planned, e.g. activities of usual tourist routes
- Information regarding planned accommodations and transportation

If you have health concerns, you should consult your physician prior to your clinic visit. Both clinics operate on an appointment basis and include a minimal consultation fee.

Adults who need to update their routine immunizations may come to either location on a walk – in basis. Please call our Main Immunization Clinic at (210) 207-8894 for additional information.

Main Travel Clinic: 345 W. Commerce, (210) 207-8872, Mon – Fri 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. by appointment or 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for adult walk – ins. (note: children can also receive immunizations at this location) or

Valley View Clinic: (co-located with the San Antonio Community Link Center) 8523 Blanco Rd (at West Ave), (210) 207-8735, Mon – Fri 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. by appointment or 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. for adult walk – ins.

